

North Fork Newaukum Mitigation Bank Chehalis Basin, Lewis County

May 18, 2005

Project Overview

The 230-acre North Fork Newaukum Mitigation Bank (NFN Bank) is located adjacent to the confluence of the North Fork and Middle Fork of the Newaukum River, east of the City of Chehalis in Lewis County, Washington. The site is jointly owned by NRCS and WSDOT. The NFN Bank is operated and maintained solely by WSDOT. Planning for the NFN Bank began in 1999, construction began in 2002, and the [Mitigation Bank Instrument](#) (MBI) was signed in April 2005. WSDOT will continue to manage and maintain the site until at least 2033, and the site is protected for perpetuity by a conservation easement obtained by NRCS in 1999.

Expected Use

The North Fork Newaukum (NFN) Bank has been established to provide advance compensatory mitigation for unavoidable impacts to wetlands from future highway construction projects within the Upper Chehalis River Basin (WRIA 23). The widening of Interstate 5 between Toutle Park and Maytown is expected to be the primary user of credits generated through the bank. The NFN bank has the potential to generate 78.39 credits over a 10-year time span. At the time the mitigation bank instrument was signed 23.98 credits became available for use. The remaining

credits will be released over the 10-year monitoring period, contingent upon site performance, as outlined in chapter 4 of the MBI.



Figure 1. A newly created pond in the east unit (May 2004).

Ecological Goals

The primary goals of the bank are to restore and enhance degraded wetlands and other aquatic resources, improve fish and wildlife habitat, restore water quality and quantity functions, and other stream and wetland functions. These goals are being achieved through reforestation of floodplain wetlands and riparian areas (Figure 2 & 3), disabling of drain tiles, and enlarging of ponded habitats (Figure 1).

Achieving the project goals and objectives will significantly increase wetland and riparian functions within in the site and provide additional functional lift within the Newaukum Basin. The mitigation activities will return floodplain agricultural lands to mixed conifer and deciduous forest. The wetland restoration and enhancement activities will improve water quality, augment summer flows, and improve fish and wildlife habitat in the Newaukum River watershed and Upper Chehalis River Basin (WRIA 23).



Figure 2. Oregon ash in the west unit (May 2005).



Figure 3. Recently planted trees with plastic plant protectors in west unit (May 2005).